

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. AHMAD
JABER

HON. RASHIDA TLAIB

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of the late Dr. Ahmad Jaber, a physician and founder of the Arab American Association of New York, a human rights advocacy organization.

Dr. Jaber was born and raised by his widowed mother in the Palestinian village of Yamoun in the West Bank. Following the example of his mother, Dr. Jaber worked hard to put himself through college and medical school. He immigrated to the United States in 1974 to pursue a medical career in obstetrics. While he is well-known for having delivered more than five thousand babies over the course of his career, Dr. Jaber was celebrated for his generosity and advocacy on behalf of others.

Dr. Jaber founded the Arab American Association of New York as a welcoming center for new immigrants to New York from the Middle East. Under his leadership, the organization grew to become a social services organization that provides adult education services, youth programming, and mental health services. More than that, the organization seeks to create cross-culture dialogue within New York's multiethnic communities. It has served as a liaison to challenge discrimination against Arab Americans.

I invite you to join me in recognizing the legacy of Dr. Ahmad Jaber as we give honor to his memory.

INTRODUCTION OF THE COMMUNITY DRIVEN RECOVERY FOR PUERTO RICO ACT

HON. JESÚS G. "CHUY" GARCÍA

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Community Driven Recovery for Puerto Rico Act along with my colleague from New York, ADRIANO ESPAILLAT. This bill strengthens transparency and local oversight of federal recovery efforts in Puerto Rico by establishing a Civil Society Task Force to ensure that Puerto Ricans have a seat at the table in decisions about recovery efforts.

More than three years since Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico, the island is still devastated and Puerto Rican voices have been shut out of the federal recovery process. The Civil Society Task Force established by this bill will represent different sectors of Puerto Rican society including community organizations, unions, nonprofits and small businesses. The Task Force will be embedded within federal recovery agencies to ensure that the Puerto Rican community's ideas and concerns are incorporated into the recovery process.

The federal recovery effort in Puerto Rico has been removed from the people of the island for too long, and this bill provides an important mechanism to bridge that gap and enhance the accountability, transparency and

credibility of the process. I urge this body to advance this bill.

TRIBUTE TO RANDY BONNER

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Mr. CALVERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to my friend Randy Bonner, who is stepping down this month from the Canyon Lake City Council. Randy is a community leader, a veteran, and a dedicated public servant whose many tireless efforts to better our region will be missed.

Randy settled into his lakeshore home in Canyon Lake more than two decades ago after retiring from his two professional careers, which included over 35 years in the computer/disk drive industry, and 28 years in the Marine Corps Reserves, from which he retired as a Colonel. His first foray into serving the small, gated city of Canyon Lake came in 2007 when Randy was elected to serve as the Canyon Lake POA Treasurer, then as the president in 2008. With his experience on the Canyon Lake POA, Randy felt prepared to serve on the City Council in 2010 and was elected by the voters to fill that role. After a brief hiatus off the council, Randy was elected again in 2016 to rejoin the council. He was selected by his city council colleagues to serve as the city's mayor in 2014 and 2017.

Throughout his time on the council, Randy has been a Board Member of the Western Riverside County Conservation Agency, the Western Riverside Council of Governments and the Riverside Transportation Agency. He has also served on the I-15 Through Temecula Valley Task Force and the Southwest Communities Financing Authorities Joint Powers Agreement (Animal Friends of the Valley). Randy is also an active member of the Canyon Lake Men's Golf Club, Over The Hill Group, After Lunch Bunch, Canyon Lake Travel Club, Canyon Lake Yacht Club, and was the Master of Ceremonies at the first Canyon Lake Veterans Day event and then again in 2010.

I want to personally acknowledge and thank Randy for serving on my Academy Nominations Selection Committee, and helping to determine which students from the 42nd Congressional District receive nominations to our military service academies. I know I speak on behalf of all residents in expressing my heartfelt thanks and praise for Randy's significant contributions to the city of Canyon Lake. I wish Randy, and his family, the very best in the years to come.

CONGRATULATING REBECCA LEGGIERI ON HER RETIREMENT

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKEY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Rebecca Leggieri, Clerk of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, who will be retiring at the end of this year after more than 24 years of service to our country.

Becky was born in Schenectady, New York, and went to St. Lawrence University on a ROTC scholarship. She joined the Army as a Quartermaster officer and rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. Ms. Leggieri first came to the House as an Army Fellow for Rep. Carolyn Kilpatrick of Michigan in 2009. Rep. Kilpatrick was a member of the Subcommittee, and during her fellowship Becky met the committee staff and learned the mechanics of the appropriations process. The Committee, recognizing her talent, hired Rebecca in 2010.

She began serving on the Defense Subcommittee in the minority. In that capacity, she needed to be versed on every facet of a vast and complex bill that encompasses hundreds of thousands of people and every issue ranging from day care to the delivery systems for nuclear weapons. This year's bill amounts to nearly \$700 billion and it impacts our nation's security and that of our planet. Becky's skills and her life experiences were all she needed to make the right decisions. In 2015, Becky Leggieri became the Subcommittee's Minority Staff Director and has worked by my side for the past five years to ensure oversight of the Department of Defense and numerous intelligence agencies. She balanced competing priorities from administrations, Members of Congress, labor, industry, state and local governments, and citizen interest groups. Her honesty, knowledge of the issues, and willingness to listen allowed her to develop legislation in which the many parties involved felt a sense of shared ownership in its enactment.

Becky Leggieri is a person of scrupulous ethics and is possessed of a sterling intellect and nimble mind, an innate political shrewdness, and poise under pressure. Most importantly, she used these talents in the service of her country and this institution to ensure that the Committee and House's constitutional prerogatives were respected and protected. Her steady hand will be sorely missed.

I know Ms. Leggieri's husband, John, and her children, Olivia and Gabriel, are so very proud of her, as are we all. I wish Becky every happiness and success in her future endeavors.

COMMITTEE REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS, "HIJACKING OUR HEROES: EXPLOITING VETERANS THROUGH DISINFORMATION ON SOCIAL MEDIA"

HON. MARK TAKANO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I rise today as Chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, to bring attention to an important issue facing our nation's veterans.

During a hearing held on November 13 of last year, the Committee heard about the risks faced by our nation's veterans when using social media. Based on the results of that hearing, as well as additional research and analysis, my Committee has prepared a report that not only details the risks faced by veterans, but also outlines a series of policy options and other solutions. The executive summary of the report, "Hijacking Our Heroes: Exploiting Veterans through Disinformation on Social

Media,” is below and the full text of the report is available at: <https://veterans.house.gov/imo/media/doc/Hijacking%20Our%20Heroes.pdf>.

The threat of foreign individuals and organizations influencing United States (U.S.) elections by manipulating social media has been a persistent and growing issue since before the 2016 election year. The threat was a significant concern during the 2020 elections.

Recent investigations and analysis document the broad proliferation of online influence campaigns that originate overseas. This includes the use of “spoofing,” or the act of disguising an electronic communication from an unknown source as being from a known, trusted source. A subset of these operations target the veteran and military service member communities in order to misappropriate their voices, authority and credibility. The pervasiveness of social media, as well as the nature of the specific threat to our election integrity and the sowing of political discord makes this a critical issue affecting both veterans and those who value veterans’ voices. As described by Chairman of the House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, Mark Takano (D-CA), “the issue of protecting our elections from foreign influence is one of critical importance to all Americans and preserving the power of veterans’ voices should be of equal concern to us all.

On Wednesday, November 13, 2019, the House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs held an investigative hearing to examine the nature and scope of threats posed to the veterans’ community through “internet spoofing.” Experts testified that stolen, misappropriated, or fraudulently created social media accounts can be used to target veterans for the purposes of disseminating political propaganda and fake news in order to influence elections. The witnesses also described romance scams and commercial fraud being perpetrated using spoofing techniques. Representatives of three major social media platforms—Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter—discussed how they are addressing this threat, particularly considering the 2020 elections, and described best practices for information sharing, protective measures, and law enforcement cooperation. The Committee later held a briefing on January 14, 2020, with representatives from several components of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) that handle law enforcement for online crimes.

Ranking Member Dr. David P. Roe (R-TN) noted during the hearing, “The evidence is clear that veterans have their identity misappropriated and that they, like other social media users, could be targets for propaganda or scams.” Although everyone who uses the internet is subject to online scams, spamming, phishing, identity theft, and other such risks, veterans are particularly susceptible to internet spoofing based on their higher propensity for political engagement (including running for office, volunteering, and sharing political opinions and information). For the purposes of disseminating political propaganda or exerting influence on dividing Americans on sensitive political “wedge issues,” veterans are targeted because of their close identification with strong national security policies, patriotism, personal sacrifice, and honor.

Chairman Takano stated during the hearing, “By impersonating veterans, these foreign actors are effectively eroding the hard-earned power and integrity of veterans’ voices.”

Veterans are more likely to be engaged in their communities, be perceived as leaders, and can exert influence on political matters (particularly with respect to defense and national security matters). Therefore, a suc-

cessful spoofing scam that results in a veteran or Veteran Service Organization (VSO) unknowingly distributing or endorsing a piece of disinformation can yield greatly increased, and sometimes even exponential, results due to the added credibility imparted to that disinformation by virtue of its approval by the veteran or VSO. With each successive endorsement or share, the credibility of the disinformation snowballs. The collective association with actual veterans and VSOs makes it increasingly unlikely that the disinformation will be closely scrutinized, questioned, or eventually exposed as fraudulent or misleading. Moreover, scammers also try to spoof veterans to gain leverage over them. Many veterans move into jobs requiring security clearances or within the federal government after they leave the military—those positions can be jeopardized if the veteran is compromised through financial fraud, identity theft, or otherwise becomes susceptible to blackmail.

Internet spoofing became a visible problem in the context of the 2016 U.S. election, when foreign disinformation spread widely across social media, including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube, among others. However, disinformation on social media and information operations conducted by sophisticated actors have occurred for far longer. In the past few years, foreign information operations have targeted divisive political issues within American society and have sought to manipulate and divide political and social communities. Unfortunately, our military and veterans’ communities are no exception. Moreover, the incidents of foreign spoofing increased following the 2016 election, and industry experts project that these numbers will continue to increase through 2020 and beyond. Russia’s Internet Research Agency (IRA), a Russian company which has engaged in online influence operations, more commonly known as a “troll farm,” dramatically expanded its information operations after the 2016 U.S. Presidential elections, both in terms of volume and intensity. Russia and Iran are the most prominent state actors in this context, but recent work has identified additional state actors, such as China and Saudi Arabia, using information operations to target communities and topics of interests.

The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence published a five-volume bipartisan report focused on Russia’s influence operations. The second volume focused on Russia’s use of social media platforms to influence the election, while the third volume focused on the shortcomings of Obama Administration efforts to combat the ongoing attacks. The third volume highlighted the lack of legislative or regulatory action to combat a known threat emanating from Russia and its intelligence services. The Senate Report sheds light on the broader issues of misinformation campaigns and predatory schemes targeting veterans presented in a report prepared by the Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA).

Industry analysts, journalists, and law enforcement agree that the problems of internet spoofing and foreign influence exerted through social media continue to grow at an alarming pace. However, neither the major platforms nor the FBI were able to identify an obvious or comprehensive solution to this ongoing problem. Both continue to devote significant resources towards combatting spoofing. However, the foreign entities who perpetrate much of this illicit activity are becoming more sophisticated in their schemes and are targeting broader swaths of internet users to more quickly and efficiently disseminate their fraudulent messaging before they are identified and deactivated.

Facebook and Twitter note that automated systems can struggle to differentiate authentic images and accounts from fraudulent, unauthorized, or duplicated accounts and thereby risk erroneously flagging and removing legitimate accounts. The platforms have chosen to err on the side of minimizing false negatives by relying upon patterns of suspicious activity and certain tactics or techniques, rather than on other identifying data (e.g., duplicative names or images, geolocation information, or ostensible organizational affiliations). Suspicious activity patterns, such as irregular, repetitive, or voluminous posting, triggers additional layers of review, including an examination of the geolocation data in order to assess where the suspicious activity may be originating. The final review and removal decisions sometimes warrant human examination, but often removals are made without any human review. Although these layered review processes may be effective in protecting legitimate users, they undoubtedly also add a significant gap in removal time for fraudulent accounts, which provides a window within which spoofers can continue to operate.

Law enforcement agencies, such as the FBI, are constrained in their abilities to efficiently identify and eliminate spoofers because the agencies only have limited access to the data held by the social media platforms. Often these agencies do not receive important information until after the platforms have already removed a spoofed account, at which point law enforcement is unable to actively monitor and trace the account in real time.

The ability of spoofers to operate from overseas, anonymously, or by using fraudulent or concealed identities requires law enforcement to rely upon account identification data and detailed activity patterns in order to accurately identify or locate the potential spoofer. However, Title II of the Electronic Communications Privacy Act (ECPA) (18 U.S.C. §§2701–2713), known as the Stored Communications Act, requires a government entity to serve a subpoena on social media platforms to compel the production of certain relevant information. Requiring a time-consuming legal process to obtain identification data hampers the ability of law enforcement to respond quickly or to fully understand the scope of a potential spoofing campaign. Therefore, the law enforcement agencies recommend increasing the amount and level of detail that the platforms can easily provide to the authorities.

Past attempts to address this problem have been piecemeal in nature and have proven ineffective to date. This fragmented approach has prevented any wholesale, systemic efforts to tighten rules or law enforcement protocols. Incremental adjustments have been made by individual platforms, which leaves an irregular landscape where motivated, corrupt actors may still be able to exploit weaknesses among the platforms.

Based on discussions with representatives of law enforcement, and considering the issues raised by the social media platforms during the hearing, the Committee believes that there are additional measures needed to address the growing threats posed by spoofing. Our recommendations fall into two broad categories.

The first category is oriented at users of social media and is defensive in nature, such as teaching users how to be aware of the dangers posed by spoofers on social media and training them how to protect themselves through heightened vigilance, healthy skepticism, and adherence to basic principles of cyber-hygiene.

The second category is aimed at putting the social media platforms and law enforcement on the offensive and developing robust

mechanisms to more effectively identify and quickly eliminate foreign-based spoofer. While the first category is likely to be less costly and easier to implement, the second category may ultimately prove to be more effective in bringing the threat under control.

HONORING THE LEGACY OF JEWEL WARE

HON. RASHIDA TLAIB

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the loss of a great public servant for the 13th Congressional District, Wayne County Commissioner Jewel Ware, and honor her memory and legacy as a commissioner for our district.

First elected in 1994, Ms. Ware was the longest-serving Wayne County Commissioner, with a district that covered a large portion of Detroit. She was particularly well-known for her commitment to serving senior residents and her work to improve access to mental healthcare. She worked directly with community-based organizations to champion issues important to the residents of the communities she served. Most recently, Commissioner Ware had sponsored a resolution that would ban on chokeholds and restraint by police in using deadly force.

Beyond her legislative work, Ms. Ware volunteered her time and energy in public service with a number of organizations, including the NAACP and The Charles. H. Wright Museum of African American History. She spearheaded an annual sock and mitten drive for children in need. Ms. Ware could frequently be found visiting senior housing, coordinating services such as free income tax preparation. Commissioner Ware also served as a member of Zeta Phi Beta Incorporated where she dedicated a lot of her time to serving others. I am truly saddened by the loss for our Wayne County and Detroit communities and am deeply grateful for the time we shared in public service together over the last decade. Her passing is truly a great loss to our district, but her presence will forever be felt in our community.

Please join me in tribute to Wayne County Commissioner Jewel Ware, as we remember her life and extraordinary contributions to Wayne County and the 13th Congressional District.

RECOGNIZING THE RETIREMENT OF ANNE EVANS

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor an energetic and tireless advocate for Connecticut businesses, Anne Evans, on her incredible career. When she retires at the end of this month, the state will lose one of the most enthusiastic and genuine advocates for local economic development after a life of working for and with small and local businesses.

Anne has served for 13 years as District Director of the U.S. Department of Commerce

International Trade Administration District Office in Middletown, Connecticut. In that position, she has brought Connecticut businesses and ingenuity to the global marketplace. As a Department of Commerce Employee, she took her role as a public servant seriously, providing local businesses with the sort of global perspective and expertise they need to grow into new markets. Before joining the Commerce Department, Anne worked for decades in the private sector in her family's tire business and ultimately became a world-recognized leader in tire recycling products in Europe and the U.S. That background made her particularly well equipped to assist small businesses cope with the sometimes daunting challenges of the global marketplace.

Like all good public servants, Anne's passion and enthusiasm comes from a true affection for our state and its people.

Anne has worked to help well over 2,500 Connecticut companies export their products and attract customers overseas—providing an enormous economic boon to our State and providing a place for Connecticut on the national business stage. Additionally, she has worked extensively with Connecticut veterans and National Guard reservists, spearheading the Veterans Workforce Development Program and helping countless veterans receive training and find private sector employment in Connecticut.

In recent years, Anne worked closely with my office on major events to support Connecticut's aerospace and defense industries—and just last year, hundreds of people came to Connecticut during the International Space Summit to engage with Connecticut companies. Anne helped expand agricultural exports abroad for smaller family farmers in Connecticut, assisted small suppliers in becoming part of the submarine supply chain, and made countless connections across industries and countries to help create win-win opportunities for everyone.

Anne's ingenuity, entrepreneurship, and creative thinking has been instrumental not just in helping Connecticut's economy, but globally. I have fond memories of the many trade missions that she and I organized and led together—from Canada to Northern Ireland to Israel.

I thank Anne for her tireless work for Connecticut. I will truly miss having her at Commerce but look forward to seeing where she lands next. I know that she will be successful in anything she does in the future.

Congratulations on her well-deserved retirement.

TRIBUTE TO YOLANDA CARRILLO

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Mr. CALVERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to my dear friend Yolanda Carrillo, who will be stepping down from the Corona City Council this month. Yolanda is a passionate advocate and a true leader who has made a significant lifetime contribution to my hometown of Corona, California.

In October of 2018, the Corona City Council voted unanimously to approve the appointment of Yolanda to the Council to fill the va-

cancy left by Dick Haley who resigned due to health concerns. Yolanda was a natural choice to sit on the City Council considering her deep knowledge of and involvement in the community. She currently serves as the Executive Director/CEO of the Corona-Norco Family YMCA, an organization she has been a part of since 1996. Just prior to her appointment to the City Council, Yolanda was appointed as a Planning Commissioner for the City of Corona's Planning and Housing Commission.

Yolanda has served in many different capacities for her city, county, and state organizations. She has been a board member of the Corona Police Community Partnership, Corona Chamber of Commerce, UNITY, and Simple Acts of Care and Kindness. She is also a member of the Corona Woman's Improvement Club, Corona Rotary Noon Club, Corona Elks Lodge, the Navy League, among many other organizations. I, like many others in our community, know from experience that when Yolanda becomes an advocate of a cause, you better get on board or get out of the way. Her passion and determination are second to none.

I know I speak on behalf of all Corona residents in expressing my heartfelt thanks and praise for Yolanda's many contributions to the City of Corona. I wish Yolanda and her husband, Ed, the very best in the future.

HONORING PEGGY BREEDEN ON HER RETIREMENT AS MAYOR OF THE CITY OF RIDGECREST

HON. KEVIN MCCARTHY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Mr. MCCARTHY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Peggy Breeden, a community leader, cancer survivor, friend, and Mayor of Ridgecrest, California. After having led the City of Ridgecrest over the last six years, Peggy is retiring as Mayor.

Peggy was born in Syracuse, New York on her family's dairy farm where she and her siblings all worked tending and milking over 100 cows that their family raised. In fact, Peggy's family farm only received electricity in 1952, making her no stranger to hard work in the face of adversity. In 1982, she moved to Ridgecrest to be with friends and family and went on to own the Swap Sheet, a local advertising weekly newspaper. But she also had a calling for public service. In addition to managing her business, she served on numerous local boards and foundations, including the Indian Wells Valley Water District, Cerro Coso Community College Foundation Board, the Eastern Kern Air Pollution Control District, and the Navy Community Council.

She took her commitment to serving the community of Ridgecrest a step further by successfully running for Mayor, making history both as Ridgecrest's first female mayor and as the first elected mayor since the office became its own position directly elected by city voters. Peggy's soft-spoken and unassuming manner should not understate her intense dedication to Ridgecrest, demonstrated leadership skills, and political acumen. She showcased these qualities as she dealt with one of the largest crises to ever face Ridgecrest.

In July 2019, Ridgecrest experienced the largest earthquakes in over 20 years, which